

**Minutes of the of training cum workshop on anaemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause  
9-10<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 at HIPA, Shimla**

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The first training cum workshop on anaemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause was held on 9-10<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 at HIPA, Shimla. The training was attended by 40 Supervisors of Women & Child Development and 41 Community Resource Persons (CRP) of Rural Development Department.

The training cum workshop started with a welcome address by Ms. Rupali Thakur, Director, Women & Child Development. While giving a brief overview about the workshop, she highlighted the importance of anaemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause in the life of a woman. Menstruation and menstrual practices still face many social, cultural, and religious restrictions which are a big barrier in the path of menstrual hygiene management. Women manage menstruation differently when they are at home or outside; at homes, they dispose of menstrual products in domestic wastes and in public toilets and they flush them in the toilets without knowing the consequences of choking. So, there is a need to educate and create awareness about the environmental pollution and health hazards associated with them.

Ms. Nisha Singh, Chairperson, Capacity Building Commission in her keynote address stated that experiences of menstruation and menopause can range from coping with mild discomfort to being severely debilitated. Yet, talking about menstruation and menopause can be difficult and uncomfortable. Many mask their symptoms in the workplace, and cope as best they can. Menstruation is a key indicator of health and vitality for women and girls. Younger populations can be targeted both as beneficiaries and as agents of behavioural change within their families and their communities.

**Objectives of the training cum workshop :**

The workshop aimed to provide Supervisors of the Women & Child Development Deptt. and Community Resource Persons (CRPs) of the Rural Development Depart with in-depth knowledge and understanding of anaemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause among children, adolescent girls and women. The specific objectives were as follows:

- a. To understand the current situation of anemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause amongst children, adolescent girls and women in Himachal Pradesh.
- b. To discuss the risks and long-term impact of anaemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause and its management strategies.
- c. To provide recommendations for controlling and managing anaemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause.
- d. To enhance the participants' understanding and preparedness of these issues.

**I. Deliberations**

The guest speakers of training cum workshop were Dr Nishi Sood, Associate Professor Deptt. of OBG, KNH, Dr. Amit Sachdeva, Assistant Professor in the Deptt. of Community Medicine, IGMC; Dr Geetika, Assistant Professor, Deptt. of OBG, KNH and Dr Kanika Sharma, Senior OBG, Deptt. of OBG, KNH. The following topics were covered in different sessions:

**1) Anaemia & complementary feeding**

**a) Current Situation of Anemia in Himachal Pradesh**

A comprehensive overview of the current situation of anemia in Himachal Pradesh. He shared data on the prevalence of anemia among children and pregnant women, highlighting the alarming rates and the need for immediate attention. The participants gained insights into the causes, risk factors, and consequences of anemia in these vulnerable populations. Risks & Long-Term Impact as well as Management and Control Strategies were emphasized and the risks associated with anemia among children and pregnant women. The long-term impact on their health, cognitive development, with overall well-being and various approaches to manage and control anemia. He emphasized the significance of a balanced diet, iron supplementation, and regular health check-ups.

**b) Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding:**

The benefits of breastfeeding for both the infant and the mother, such as improved nutrition, immunity, and bonding were shared with participants. The participants learned about the recommended duration and techniques of breastfeeding. Furthermore, the topic of complementary

feeding was discussed. The importance of introduction of nutritious solid foods to complement breastfeeding, ensuring optimal growth and development of the child was also highlighted. The guidelines on appropriate timing, food choices, and feeding practices to ensure adequate nutrition during the transition from exclusive breastfeeding to complementary feeding was elaborated.

## 2. Menstruation hygiene

### a) Awareness regarding good menstrual hygiene practices

Menstruation and menstrual practices face challenges like social, cultural, and religious restrictions which are a big barrier in the path of menstrual hygiene management and these were highlighted in the training. Issues like how to effectively manage menstruation of girls & women, requirement of access to water, sanitation & hygiene (WASH) facilities, affordable & appropriate menstrual hygiene materials, information on good practices, and a supportive environment were discussed with the participants.

### b) Proper disposal of sanitary pads

Disposal of menstrual waste which forms an important aspect from both hygiene and environmental perspective was elaborated in the training.

### c) Observance of good menstrual hygiene practices in special circumstances like in disaster situations / or persons with special needs

Management of girls and women with impairments who are particularly stigmatized and facing double burden of being female and having a disability and often disregarded and violated was elaborated with participants. Steps to be taken to identify hygiene needs of persons with disabilities and to support them were also highlighted during the course of training.

## 3. Menopause

### a) Physiology of menopause/ Normal changes experienced by menopause women.

Types of menopause and cause and/or timing of the end of menstruation & sign and symptoms of menopause was highlighted

### b) Health issues specifically related to menopause and management.

Symptoms and preventing or managing chronic conditions that occur with aging and require treatments was also discussed

### c) Health condition like hypertension, diabetes, obesity, Heart disease, which is more commonly occurring after menopause, also formed the point of discussion in the training.

### d) Common Cancers in women occurring in this age gap and preventive & screening aspect was also discussed.

The sessions were interactive. Multiple activities were planned to involve maximum numbers of trainees. Power point presentations were shown well-illustrated with colourful pictures. Training was conducted in Hindi and English using simple lessons.

## II. Learning's

The training cum workshop provided valuable insights and learning opportunities for the supervisors of the Women & Child Department and CRPs of the Rural Development Department.

### The key learning's were:

- 1) There is a huge gap in awareness level of field functionaries which needs to be bridged by way of such programmes/trainings.
- 2) Trainee's in this programme have been trained to impart awareness at field level.
- 3) Sensitization of male participants/trainee's on menstrual hygiene management will lessen the barrier.
- 4) Raising awareness of menopause and its impact on women at individual and societal levels as well as on physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being will prove beneficial.

- 5) Screening/ training for breast cancer and other gynecological malignancies by the field functionaries will decrease the risk. Requisite facilities needs to be created at least at district & Block level.
- 6) Screening of bone density and advice by Health.


### III. Issues:

Some of the key issues identified during the deliberations were as follows:

- 1) Trainee's were of diverse group with different expectations and level of understanding.
- 2) Lack of Awareness of the topics amongst the participants.
- 3) Emphasis can be given on preventive health care especially screening of cervical and Breast Cancer.
- 4) Access to Nutritious Food: Availability and accessibility of nutritious food, especially in remote and marginalized areas, remains a challenge.
- 5) Capacity Building: The need for regular capacity-building initiatives for supervisors and CRPs to enhance their knowledge and skills in addressing these issues needs to be emphasized.
- 6) Collaboration: Strengthening collaboration between the Women & Child Development and Rural Development Deptts. can lead to a more coordinated and comprehensive approach.
- 7) Menopause get limited attention in the training curricula for many health-care workers.

### IV. Conclusion of the training cum workshop:

The training cum workshop provided supervisors of the Women & Child Department and CRPs of the Rural Development Department in Himachal Pradesh with valuable insights into. The participants gained a deeper understanding of the current situation, risks, and long-term impact, as well as strategies for control and management of anemia, menstrual hygiene and menopause. The workshop served as a platform for knowledge exchange and discussion on critical issues, emphasizing the importance of awareness, accessibility, and capacity building to address these challenges effectively.


  
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Endst No. WCD-H(c) F/19/2023 - 8225

Dated 02.06.23 Shimla-1.

Copy to:

1. The Secretary (Training & FA) to the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh for information please.
2. The Director, HIPA, Fairlawns, Shimla-12 for information & necessary action.
3. The SPS to the Chairperson, Capacity Building Commission to the Govt. of H.P for information.

  
Director,  
Women and Child Development,  
Himachal Pradesh